

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Illinois
COUNTY: Cook
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Dearborn Station (also known as Polk Street Station)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
47 West Polk Street, at Dearborn Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chicago

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE:  
Illinois

CODE:

COUNTY:  
Cook

CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Chicago and Western Indiana Railroad

STREET AND NUMBER:  
47 West Polk Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chicago

STATE:  
Illinois

CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Recorder of Deeds, Cook County

STREET AND NUMBER:  
118 North Clark Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chicago

STATE:  
Illinois

CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1960

Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
District of Columbia

CODE:

STATE:

COUNTY:

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

ORIGINAL

The building is a railroad passenger terminal for eight tracks abutting a freight terminal and trainshed that are not included in this nomination. The terminal stretches for 212 feet along Polk Street where its principal facade faces north. Wings project to the south along Plymouth Place (where extensive original paving survives) on the east and Federal Street on the west.

The terminal is of masonry construction with cast iron structural elements and resting on spread footings. The exterior masonry is a combination of pink granite, red brick, and red ornamental terra cotta, all enriched with cut and cast mouldings and details.

The terminal building is organized into four elements. Two are the three-story corner blocks. The third is a two story (now three story) recessed central section, and the last is a high clock tower. The eastern corner block was originally the entrance to the terminal waiting rooms and is larger than the west corner block. It had four arches on its east face and three on its north face. The tower is set west of the center of the recessed central section, relieving the building of monotony arising from symmetry and allowing the height of the tower to balance the larger mass of the eastern corner block.

The walls rest on a rusticated granite sill that varies in height. It has one stone above grade along the central section and western corner block, becomes a half story high on the eastern corner block, and rises to one and a half stories under the clock tower. The masonry above this base is of common bond pressed brick with occasional horizontal bands defining string courses and with cornices of ornamental terra cotta. Arched openings appear on the first and third floors, and rectangular openings framed by moulded bricks are used on the second floor.

Originally, the roofing consisted of independent roof structures on each of the four sections. Hipped roofs appeared above each corner block, a gabled roof on the central section, and a steep, broken pitched Flemish Gothic roof on the tower. The roofs were ornamented with horizontal bands of different colored slates and by dormer windows. The dormers were triangular in shape and contained an arched window.

The most striking feature of the building is its clock tower which makes the building highly visible at the foot of Dearborn Street. Above its limestone base a simple brick shaft ascends far above the roof line. The shaft has an arched window near the bottom, three sets of slit windows along its height, and a grouping of three windows on each face just below a bracketed cornice. Above this is a rectangular block containing the clock set within a highly textured field; this was originally topped by the roof.

The interior originally contained fireplaces and other ornate and useful appointments. The main waiting room is in

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

6. (con)

Illinois Historic Structures Survey  
state  
1972  
1800 South Prairie Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois

Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks  
local  
1972  
320 North Clark Street, Room 800  
Chicago, Illinois

Landmarks Preservation Council and Service Inventory  
local  
1974  
407 South Dearborn  
Chicago, Illinois

7. (con.)

the central section and contains an open well between the first and second floors.

PRESENT CONDITION

On December 21, 1922, a fire swept through the upper portions of the building. Within a matter of weeks the engineering department of the Santa Fe Railroad had completed the necessary rebuilding, basing its design on that of Solon S. Beman's Grand Central Station (1889-90; destroyed), according to the railroad's magazine (The Santa Fe Magazine, vol. XVII, no. 3, 1923, p. 35). The roofs on the corner blocks and tower were replaced with flat ones not visible from the ground, thus depriving the building of its dramatic massing. The central two story section was given an additional story that repeated the design of the floor below; it too was given a flat roof. This addition had the effect of producing a more compact sense of mass for the building that is very much in keeping with its masonry forms and helps to compensate for the loss of the high roofs.

Other alterations have been less consequential. The portcochere that originally appeared only before the east corner block has been extended across the front to the western corner block and along the east face of the western block. During an entrance remodeling in 1946 the ground floor

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7. (con. -2-)

was altered but without substantial loss to the fabric. The arches remain, although they have been bricked up. The entire interior has been remodelled, but the two story space of the waiting room remains, as does the ornate stair railing of the clock tower.

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1883-84

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce     | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The terminal building is a superb example of nineteenth century Victorian architecture in the Romanesque style. Its architect, Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz (1853-1921), a prominent architect in Buffalo and in New York City who specialized in commercial buildings, had been a collaborator with Henry H. Richardson on the New York State Capitol in Albany. This is his only work in Chicago, and one of his best works anywhere.

Romanesque architecture of the period is rare in buildings of this size and prominence in the Chicago area only because many others have been destroyed. The original building was excellent in design, revealing the best of balance, mass, and vigor that the style could muster. The present building, while less striking than the original structure, is nonetheless a very good example of the style and good in itself. The statement of Montgomery Schuyler, an architectural critic of the period, remains valid despite the 1922 alterations: it is "architecturally by much the best station and one of the ornaments of the city."

It remains an ornament to the city, clearly visible from the Loop at the end of Dearborn Street, one of Chicago's principal streets. Urbanistically, it helps to tie together the commercial Loop area with the area to the south. As a link between the two areas and as a tie between the past and the future, the station is indispensable.

It is the oldest surviving railroad terminal in Chicago, and one of the oldest major railroad terminals surviving in the United States. (It is not now used for passenger traffic.) While the Santa Fe was the principal road using it, others included the Wabash, the Erie, and the C & O.

It is the oldest surviving remnant in the central area of Chicago that can call attention to the role railroads and the commerce they carried, both in package goods and passengers, played in the development of Chicago, a city built by the railroads and the railroad capital of the country.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Montgomery Schuyler, "Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz," Architectural Record, V (April-June, 1896), pp. 411-435.

Carroll L.V. Meeks, The Railroad Station, New Haven, 1956.

F.A. Randall, History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago, Urbana, 1949.

H.M. Mayer and R.C. Wade, Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis, Chicago, 1969 (photo of original design), p. 127

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than one**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**C.W. Westfall, President, with Robert Furhoff**

ORGANIZATION: **Landmarks Preservation Council**      DATE: **July 1, 1975**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**407 South Dearborn**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chicago**      STATE: **Illinois**      CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National     State     Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS